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1875.

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History of the Village

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The Bloomfield Record.

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KNOWLEDGE IS POWER, BUT TRUTH IS THE FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

Vol. III. No. 33.

BLOOMFIELD, N. J. FRIDAY, AUGUST 27, 1875.

Whole No. 136.

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Little Miggs.

None of us knew exactly what was going to happen, but we could not fail to notice the look of anxiety which the master's face had worn during all the morning lessons. This alone was enough to arouse our suspicion, even though Mullett and Decker had not been absent. But they were, and that settled it at once. Something was wrong, and there proved to be only two in the school room that morning who could answer the eager question which passed from lip to lip from the lowest tier of small boys to the last row which held such big fellows as Lloyd, Gray and Bridgman, and these two were—the master and Little Miggs. Poor little Miggs, he evidently knew, for he sat very still in his seat, and never once looked up from his book. But he wasn't studying, for if you took the pains to look you could see he didn't turn a leaf. He was very pale—but that isn't strange, for little Miggs's face was always white. Don't you see the handle of a crutch just in sight above his desk?

You cannot expect boys to study very attentively when some expected disclosure is hanging over them, and how we ever got through the morning is a question for a jury. Half-past one. The school session is over at two. Can it be possible we are to be dismissed without knowing why Mullett and Decker are absent, and why the master and little Miggs have looked like a funeral all day. The master strikes his bell.

"Boys, the usual half hour for writing will be omitted this morning. The school will come to order, as there is an important matter to be brought before you. During the ten years I have been connected with this establishment there has never been any serious conflict with my authority; never any waywardness where pardon could not be granted when asked. Yesterday, however, an offense of so grave a nature was committed or at least attempted, and one for which I was so little prepared, that I was at a loss to know the best way of meeting it. The severe action I finally adopted is the result of consultation and of serious reflection on my part; and that the lesson may not be without benefit to you all, I have decided to inform the school of the whole matter, together with the course my method of punishment has taken."

A pin drop! Why might you have heard the very dust fall had you been thinking of it. We were frightened, too, and Todd, down in the corner, began to cry, which might have made some impression if Todd were not always crying; so we let him whimper without much notice, and sat watching the door through which the master passed, after charging us to keep our seats. We had not long to—only time to say, "Shut up, Todd," once or twice, when the door reopened.

The master, Mullett, Decker, and—and—is it possible, Coles the constable! We rub our eyes and stretch our necks, but cannot change that burly form into anything but Coles the constable. This was more than we bargained for, having thought the excitement would culminate in a public flogging at the most expulsion. The culprits were placed before master's desk, and Coles took a seat on the platform beside him.

Little Miggs, will you come and take this chair, if you please."

The boy slowly arose, took his crutch and limped to the seat assigned him. As he passed across the floor you could see he was a cripple, and a sadly deformed one, to ; but you couldn't have been in the school a single day without discovering that he is the favorite. Who could umpire a game of ball or cricket with the fairness of little Miggs? No one ever thought for a moment of disputing his decisions; and the cheers which followed the conclusion of a game, those for little Miggs always seemed the heartiest and most prolonged.

"Boys, I learned from little Miggs yesterday that a conspiracy had been formed to commit a crime in this house. The information was given that I might be on my guard. I could not draw from my informant the names of those implicated, but through means of a fortunate accident I discovered the culprits. What the crime was, and how the design was thwarted shall be told by one who was a listener, although an unwilling one, at the plotters' rendezvous. I have insisted on this public disclosure, and I need hardly assure you that my principal witness tells his story with the greatest reluctance, and only by my express desire."

"If you please, Sir," said little Miggs, "I was down in the birch hut yesterday, which we built, you know, for our ball club meetings. There was one appointed for that day, but it rained and so it was adjourned. I was late, and didn't get there until all the boys were gone. It was raining so hard, that I could not return, and as the roof isn't tight, the water poured through, so I crawled into the large box where we keep our clubs—it is the old dog kennel—and I could not have been there more than five minutes, when I heard Mullett and Decker talking outside, and by-and-by they came in and seated themselves on the box over my head. I was just going to come out, when Mullett said:

"But are you sure you can put your hand on the money after you get in?" "Yes," said Decker, "he kept it under his pillow at night. Miggs, when he put it there the day master had been asleep on the lounge in his room where he was sick. I lay very quiet while he talked over their plans. I was very much frightened, Sir, for I soon discovered that they meant to rob you last night. I found it was their intention to steal sleep when the dormitories were inspected for the night, and then one was to conceal himself in your room, before you came up from your study, while the other was watching in the corridor; and if successful, they were going to hire a horse and carriage at Jewett's early this morning and get away as soon as possible and run off to sea. Then, Sir, they began talking very low indeed, and the rain on the roof made so much noise, I couldn't make out just what they said, and oh Sir! just at that moment I found I was going to sneeze. I tried all I could to stop it, but it would come, and I really think, Sir, it was the loudest sneeze I ever gave. Then there was nothing for me to do but to come out."

"See here, young one, have you been listening to all this?" said Decker. "Oh yes, Decker," I cried, "and how can you?" "Now just stop that sniveling, or I'll give you something to cry for," said I and that Decker had been drinking. Then Mullett said quite kindly, although he was very much excited, "Now, little Miggs, we're bound to carry this thing through, and we won't have interference. We mustn't permit you to leave this place to-night and interrupt our plans. Yes, on one condition can you appear at the school this evening, and that is that you will solemnly promise, upon your oath, not to mention what you have heard to a single soul until our flight has been discovered."

"Mullett, Mullett, how can I promise you this?" I said. "No, no, don't ask it, Oh, Decker, think of this awful thing you are going to do; and to the best master a boy ever had. Dear Mullett, you saved my life last winter when my sled broke through the ice, and I love you so I can't let you do this. Listen to me. If only you will give up these wicked plans now and forever and ever, no one shall hear or know anything about them; but if you will not, and I grew suddenly brave, Sir, I will surely tell master everything."

"We all stood very still for a few minutes, and the rain on the leaves outside and on the roof fell with such a lonely sound that, I believe, Sir, I began to cry. Mullett stretched out his hand toward me and said: 'Little Miggs, I've half a mind—when Decker who, as I told you before, Sir, had been drinking, sprang forward, and seizing me by the arm, said: 'Miggs, you young sneaking eavesdropper, don't you leave this hut to-night; and as for you, Mullett, if you're going to back down, I'll shoulder the whole thing myself, but have a care how you step out of it, for you've gone too far to prove your innocence now.'"

"I'm not going to back out, said Mullett."

"Then help me bind Miggs to the center post. They'll be sure to find him to-morrow, and by that time we will not care how much he bleats. I prayed Decker not to tie me there over night; it was such a cruel, cruel thing, but he did it, Sir. Mullett insisted that I should not stand, so he brought a box for me to sit on, and then turned and looked out of the hut while Decker tied me with the measuring rope. I was faint and dizzy and but for the rope under my arm I should have fallen over. Mullett came up and said:

"Little Miggs, can you forgive me?" "Yes," I said, "I forgive you, Mullett," and that is all I remember, dear master, until I awoke and found that you and Crane were come to release me."

"Boys," said the master, "I will continue the narrative. Last evening, just after tea, I was sitting in my study, when Crane entered, breathless, with the astonishing announcement that he had discovered little Miggs bound fast in the birch hut, and apparently dead. I hastened to the place, and as I looked in I feared that Crane was right, and that little Miggs was indeed dead. Upon examination, however, I found he had only fainted, and even as we worked at the rope he revived. Without questioning I took him in my arms and brought him up at once to the study. He lay on the lounge a long time without speaking. Presently he said:

"Master, there will be an attempt made to-night to rob you. Please don't put your purse under your pillow, and they will get nothing."

"Who will get nothing little Miggs?" "Oh, Sir, I cannot tell you to-night, indeed."

"He was interrupted by a rap at the door. It was the housekeeper."

"Come to my room, quick, Sir, Decker is very ill," she whispered.

"I found him on the sofa, his arms hanging lifelessly over the back, his hair disheveled, his clothes in disorder. In truth I found him not sick but intoxicated. Giving instructions that he should not be removed until I returned, I left the room and was met in the hall by Mullett, who asked to have a word with me."

"Not now, Mullett," I explained; "I'm very much occupied."

"If you please, Sir, I know all about it. Decker, little Miggs, and all; and if you'll only let me, I'll confess everything. I can't go to bed. I can't sleep. Oh, Sir, I'm so miserable."

"Come to my study, Mullett," I said. As I opened the door he caught sight of little Miggs. Springing to the lounge he threw himself upon his knees and buried his face in his hands, and I guessed much of the truth at once. What I did not know was told to me between the sobs of the contrite boy. But the possibility of such a crime in our midst was too imminent not to demand a severe and long to be remembered punishment and this morning I placed them both under arrest. Debauchery, theft, perhaps worse, by two of the most influential boys in school—could I do less than to make this an everlasting example?"

"You can't, dear master," cried little Miggs, "but make it an example of forgiveness. It was through me they are condemned; let them through me be pardoned. Think of the punishment of this exposure. Is it not all evident? Mullett saved my life, Sir, and Decker was always so kind and gentle with me and so he would have been yesterday, only he was not himself. Oh, Sir, won't you let it pass?"

Oh, the effect of these kind words from little Miggs! At once there was a difference in feeling among the boys. Looks of wrath gave place to those of pity and compassion, and the culprits begged with tears for forgiveness and pardon. The master was moved. He leaned his head upon his hands in deep thought, then arose and talked in a low voice with the constable, who afterwards left the room.

"Boys, I have decided to hold a court of my own. You shall be the jury, and little Miggs here shall be the judge."

walls of rough posts, lining our pathway on either hand. On inquiry I found those were merely telegraph poles, and then for the first time I fully realized the tremendous speed at which we were flying through space.

On, on we rush:
By tower and town,
By hill and vale and river,
and still the steam demon tears along with unabated speed. A flash of light dazzles our eyes for an instant. What is it? We have passed a great town and all its myriad gaslights have appeared bundled in one.

"Poughkeepsie," cries the fearless conductor; "four minutes and sixteen seconds!" We have barely time to comprehend this startling announcement when the same phenomenon of a sudden glare of light flashes upon our surprised vision; and we know that we have left Albany behind in our swift flight.

Meantime, at every station huge packages of *Heralds* are hurled forth into the commercial darkness by the sinewy arm of the head folder, and quickly distributed among the waiting multitudes, who tear one another to atoms in their frantic struggles to procure supplies of that mental pabulum.

Just after passing Rochester—time, 17 minutes 1 second—the alarming discovery was made that the stock of *Heralds* was nearly exhausted. For a moment all were dismayed, but our gallant leader proved equal to the emergency. Ordering a halt at Buffalo, he headed a foraging party, made a raid upon the office of one of the leading dailies, and speedily returned laden with presses, type, and paper. An impromptu printing office was quickly extemporized in the rear car, and as the flying train rushed madly westward, fresh editions of the great newspaper were continually being struck off in transit. A member of the intellectual department performed the noteworthy feat of reciting the entire contents of the paper from memory, and the lightning compositors were thus enabled to set it up without difficulty.

At 8:15-22 A. M. we shot through Detroit like the fiery spirit of vengeance, having traversed the distance in just 45 minutes and 22 seconds; but our engineer, old Dan Rogers, turned to your reporter, who was riding astride the boiler, and winking his eye remarked, "Hold fast, young 'un; I shall now proceed to loose the rein of the sinewy steed, clap my spurs into his perspiring sides, and urge them to still greater speed." I tightened my hold, and made assurance doubly sure by tying my arm to the side of the boiler.

I was just about adjusting my field glass to get the first view of the mighty Father of Waters, when a red glowing object flew past with the speed of an enraged simoon. It was merely the smoke stack that had melted off. A water cooler from one of the passenger cars, filled with the body of a reporter who had been decapitated because he persisted in pronouncing the title of his journal "*Herald*," instead of "*Herold*," was speedily placed over the orifice, and on we flew for Michigan City. A train on the Lake Shore road was passing in front of us, but with another wrench at the throttle valve, and an "All hands hold fast!" from the calm conductor, we took a flying leap and cleared the whole train of sixteen coaches, engine, and express car, with an ease and grace like those displayed by Teddy Flynn in writing an intellectual leader.

We stopped 3 1/2 seconds at Chicago, just long enough to deliver the regular edition of 200,000 and give the boys a view of the Phoenix of the West. After changing engines the whistle gave one wild shriek of warning and we were off. In twenty minutes we glided into Council Bluffs amid the cheers of the vast multitude there assembled to greet us.

On we flew, passing through a terrific thunder storm, but such was our tremendous speed that the rain-drops fell far behind us. The engine was now running on three wheels, the remaining five having melted off. The snorting monster tore up the Rocky Mountains, tore up the track, tore up everything in fact, and we reached Ogden in the unparalleled time of 2 hours, 45 minutes and 10 1/2 seconds. Here we staid a complete edition into Salt Lake City, and changed engines for the last time.

From the summit to San Francisco was a ride of thrilling excitement. On, on past deep gorges, skirting the ragged edges of fearful canyons, and dashing through avalanches of snow as the sun penetrates the morning mists. Our speed rapidly increases; we clear the Sacramento on the fly, tear through California street, and with one mad plunge rush upon the waves of the Pacific. It is a terrible moment! Will our fearful momentum prove sufficient to prevent our sinking beneath the dark sea? The question is quickly answered. We fly over the white crests of the bounding billows like the lonely wandering albatross. Notwithstanding the vast weight of our train, the marvellous speed at which we are traveling renders it impossible that we should sink into the foaming surges, for even the attraction of gravitation is overcome. Like stones thrown by idle boys, we glance and skip from wave to wave, as skin like the swift swallow over the wild waste of waters, a striking illustration of the unrelieved wonders of natural science, and a new proof of the mysterious influence of the *Herald*.

maining locks of my hair not already blown off by our terrific speed, and his heavy head upon my left arm, and as a yell of anguish rent the air, throw open the throttle, and we were off again.

The engineer afterward explained that as the whistle had been blown away he was compelled to resort to that expedient as a signal of departure. The twenty-four minutes that elapsed before we came to a sudden stop in the market place of Hong Kong are a blank to me. Our speed was so terrific that every member of the party had to hold his ears on with both hands, and several gentlemen who were unfortunately rather largely developed in that region lost their altogether, while each individual arrived in China as bald headed as a billiard ball.

Dismounting from our shattered train we found ourselves surrounded by over a seven-million Celestials, to whom the remaining copies of the paper were quickly disposed of. This done, we sought rest and refreshments after our unweary exertions, proud of our participation in this greatest of all journalistic enterprises. The actual time of the trip was 78 hours, 47 minutes, 19 seconds, or 1 hour, 13 minutes and 41 seconds less than schedule time. I shall return by steamer in the course of a month or two, as soon as sufficiently recuperated.

The rest of the party start to-morrow on a barefoot pilgrimage to Kamschatka, there to do homage to their young chief, whose giant intellect originated the great enterprise which his humble employees have just brought to a successful conclusion and in which your correspondent has borne a not wholly unworthy part—that chief who stands confidently at the head of all his contemporaries as the journalist of the future, whose busy brain is ever occupied with schemes for the astonishment of his fellow creatures.

Feminine Facts and Fancies.

Put on a "pull-back and tip-up dress" while you may, for the fashion is dying.

Speaking of the hair, it is still worn low on the back of the head in a simple coil, either plain or braided.

West Troy, New York, has a boat club of young women, but they usually take young men along to do the rowing.

Combs both back and side are still worn, and tortoise-shell are perhaps most in favor. Some combs are traced on the back with gold, the effect in the hair being very pretty.

A contemporary wonders whether Cain and Abel ever had the mumps or the whooping-cough. Very probably. It's certain, at all events, that their mother had Adam.

While not one ex-President is living, the wives of five others survive—Mrs. Polk, Mrs. Fillmore, Mrs. Tyler, Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Johnson. Of these ladies one is insane and another at the point of death.

The Princess of Wales's latest and most effective toilet is described as consisting of ivory satin trimmed with rich brown velvet, lined with pale blue, and looped with bunches of shaded roses. The ornaments were pearls and diamonds.

A young man when he was married, didn't want to patronize the baker. He said bread tasted ever so much better made by her dear hands. This delighted her. But when she wanted a scuffle of coal and he suggested that she should get it, and the fire would feel so much if the coal was brought by her dear hands, she was disgusted. She remonstrated with him with the poker, telling him he might enjoy a trotting from her dear hands.

A Dubuque medical student has come to grief by reason of his remarkable technical knowledge. The young woman to whom he was attached one morning received the following note: "Dear Angelina, I am sorry to inform you that in consequence of a circumscribed subcutaneous inflammation, characterized by a pointed pustular tumor suppurating in the center of a carunculus, I am unable to enjoy the pleasure of your company to the Hippodrome. Ever, dearest, thine, Augustus." She read it; she rushed to his home in agony of apprehension, and found that he had only one of those those things of which Job had so many. When she returned home her sensible mother told her that she had better drop that erudite young man; if married he would, doubtless, beggar his family by buying Latin Dictionaries and such. The maternal advice was followed; and now Augustus suffers from something worse than a carunculus.

A Lone Hand.

Day before yesterday Mrs. Bliss found a eucure deck in her boy's pocket, and when she took him by the hair he calmly said:

"Hold on, mother—it isn't your play." "I'll play you!" she hissed, tightening her grip. "How came you by these cards?"

"Mother, you shouldn't tramp me this way!" he explained.

"Trumps! trumps! what do you know about trumps?"

"Why, mother, any fool knows that the right hower will take an ace every time."

"It will, eh?" she hissed as she walked him around.

"Of course it will. If diamonds are trumps, for instance, and I hold the ace and left bow—"

"Bowers! bowers! I'll bow you to death, young man!" she said as she walked him the other way.

"Or, suppose that spades were trumps, you held the nine spot and King and turned up the ace, what would you do?" he earnestly inquired.

"Oh, I'll show you what I'd do!" she growled as she got in a left-hander on his ear. "I'll teach you a lesson you'll never forget!"

"That wouldn't be Hoyle, mother; you could pick up the ace and make a point every—"

But she drew him over her knee and played a lone hand.—Detroit Free.